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By-paths of Bible Knowledge

XX.

THE MONEY OF THE BIBLE

GEORGE C. WILLIAMSON D.L.

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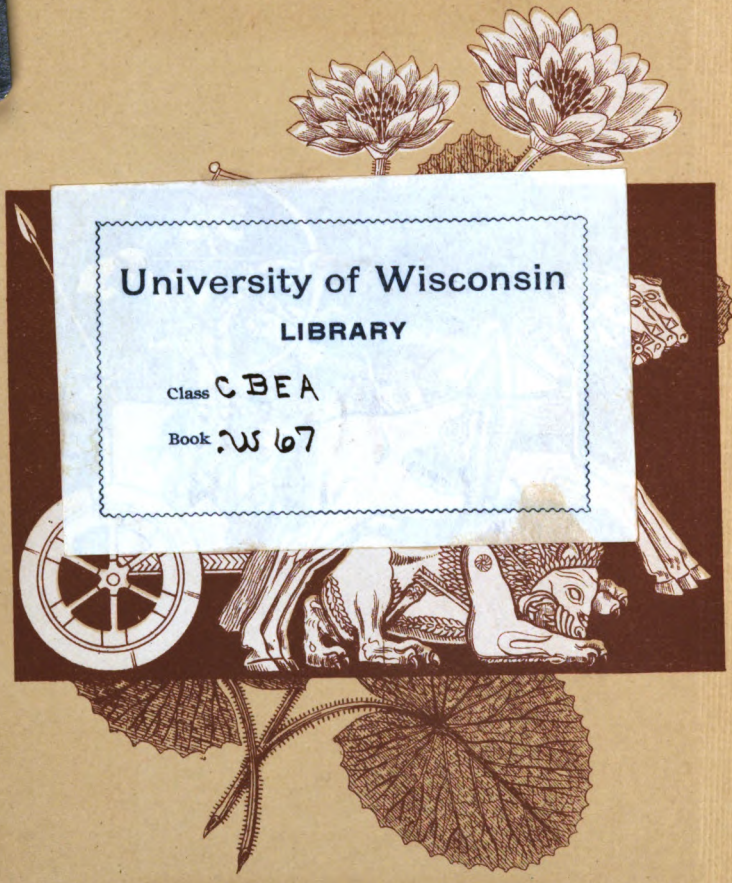

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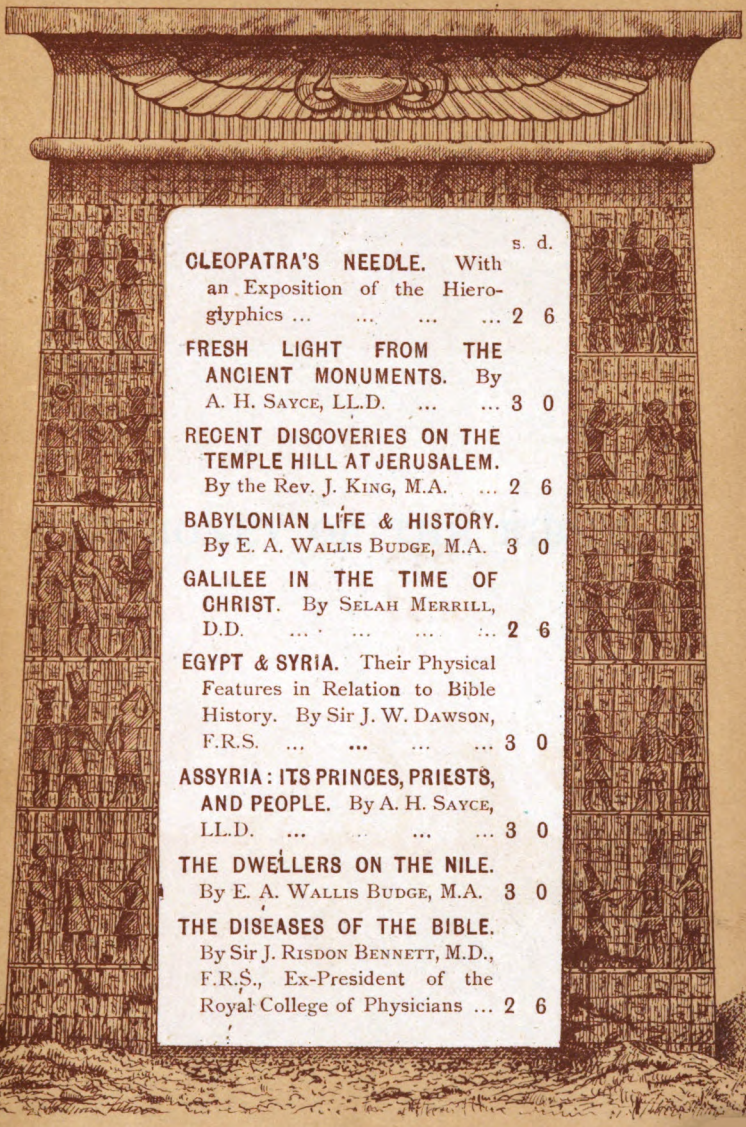

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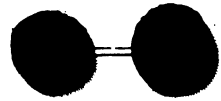

The Widows Mite

Chalkous
of Pontius Pilate.
(Farthing)

Denarius.
The Emperor Tiberius
A.D. 15.
(Penny)

Half Shekel
of Simon Maccabaeus.
B.C. 145.

Shekel
of Simon Maccabaeus
B.C. 145.

Shekel
Simon Bar-Cochab

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By-Paths of Bible Knowledge

XX

THE MONEY OF THE BIBLE

ILLUSTRATED BY NUMEROUS WOODCUTS AND FACSIMILE REPRESENTATIONS

BY

GEORGE C. WILLIAMSON

D.LIT., MEMB. NUM. SOC. LOND., ETC.

AUTHOR OF 'TRADE TOKENS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY,' ETC.

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY

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INTRODUCTION

THIS little book does not claim to be anything more than a hand-book for the Bible student. It is intended to supply a want which has been brought often and practically to my notice.

The works on Biblical Numismatics or Jewish coins are exhaustive, but are costly, and in many instances rare. They are usually written for those already learned in the science, and are full of technical information. They are frequently in foreign tongues, and abounding in references given in the original Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. For these and other reasons the works to which I refer are of little value to any but advanced students.

Necessarily this book has been a compilation from the standard works on the subject, and it is a digest of what has been decided by those best qualified to speak on this interesting branch of science. No pains have been spared to consult the best and the latest authorities, and every work that is known to me on the

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subject has received careful attention. In many cases extracts have been made from the writings of those who have made Jewish currency a life study, and a full and grateful acknowledgement is given, especially of my indebtedness to the works of Madden and de Saulcy. Without Madden's costly works no student can even pretend to study the subject, and his writings have been laid under heavy contribution, as the works of the greatest authority. A list is appended of the chief books that have been consulted, for the use of such readers as may desire a fuller knowledge of the subject, and to give it a deeper investigation. The third book in the list can be recommended as the great work on the subject.

I have written this treatise in easy language, and perhaps even over-explained myself, beside translating every reference given in the original. It seemed necessary in most cases to give the original, as an aid to the more highly educated reader; but the book is mainly written for popular use and commended to popular attention.

G. C. W.

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THE MONEY OF THE BIBLE

CHAPTER I

UNCOINED MONEY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

In considering the money of the Bible it is important in the first place to draw a broad line of distinction between uncoined and coined money, and it will be seen that, with one or two possible exceptions, the money of the Old Testament falls under the first of these heads. It will be found, however, as the subject is pursued, that for the piece of money to be uncoined does not necessarily imply that it has not a distinctive and special value, as weighed pieces of silver were of frequent and well-recognized use in the early times with which the Bible has to do.

In the Book of Job (xlii. 11) we have what is perhaps the earliest reference in the Bible to currency, each of his friends giving him when visiting him

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a piece of money (or silver) and an ear-ring of gold. The word used for piece of money in this passage is *kesitah* (קְשִׂיטָה). This word occurs three times in the Old Testament; in the above passage in Job, in the reference to the purchase of a piece of land by Jacob at Shechem for one hundred pieces (Gen. xxxiii. 19), and in Joshua xxiv. 32, where the same piece of land is again mentioned. It literally means 'a portion,' and refers in all probability to a piece of rough metal, broken off, but probably having a known and recognized value by weight.

The ear-ring of gold gives a further allusion to the use of pieces of metal of known and recognized weight, either for purchasing or, until so required, as ornaments. The Septuagint version of the Bible more accurately translates this phrase a tetradrachm of uncoined gold (*τετράδραχμον χρυσοῦ καὶ ἀσήμου*).

It is clear, as all the friends of the patriarch Job gave him the same gift, and that in conjunction with a piece of silver, that the ear-ring was representative of certain value, and it is equally evident that Job used his gifts in the purchase of cattle, as we read in the next verse that he was possessed of thousands of animals.

Similar instances of the use of ornaments of gold, both as decoration and also as representative of wealth, are to be found in the Old Testament. The Midianites (Num. xxxi. 50, 51) carried their wealth with them in the form of chains, bracelets, ear-rings,

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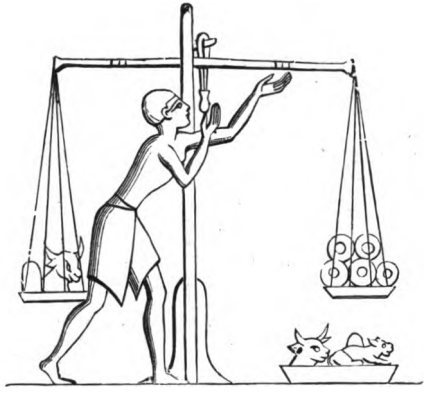
and tablets, and the Israelites on leaving Egypt spoiled the Egyptians of jewels of silver and jewels of gold, obtaining the wages for their long and arduous labour in this way (Exod. xii. 35, 36).

These ornaments probably had a distinctive weight, which was known and possibly stamped upon them. The servant of Abraham gave to Rebekah 'a golden ear-ring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets



EGYPTIAN WEIGHING MONEY.

for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold' (Gen. xxiv. 22).

The ancient Egyptians are represented in contemporary paintings as weighing rings of metal, gold, and white gold (i. e. silver), and of keeping by them vessels containing piles of such weighed rings, each having, in all probability, its own distinctive value. The illustrations are from Sir Gardner Wilkinson's

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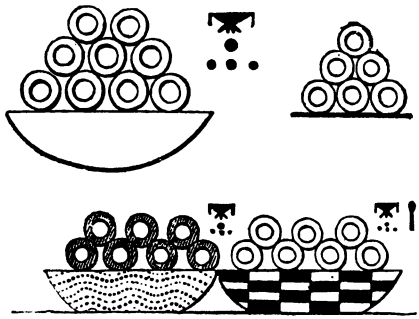
work on the *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. ii. p. 149, and are from drawings made in the tombs.

The money used by the children of Israel when they went to purchase corn in Egypt may have been of this ring shape, resembling the bronze rings for arms and ankles still occasionally found in the bogs of Ireland and those used by uncivilized tribes in the South Seas. The Israelitish money is spoken of as 'bundles of money' (Gen. xlii. 35), and a similar



EGYPTIAN RING MONEY.

phrase occurs in the Book of Deuteronomy (Deut. xiv. 24–26), where the payment of tithe is permitted in money instead of kind, when distance prevents the journeying of flocks. The passage states, 'then shalt thou turn it into money, and bind up the money in thine hand;' and this implies the use of ring money, or at all events of money in pieces that could be tied or fastened together.

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This use of ring money, and its kindred one of ornament for the person, representing material and available wealth, is spread through many Oriental nations, and in places still holds its own.

Nubia is one of the countries in which ornamental ring money is still used, and in the cabinets of the Numismatic Society may be seen some interesting specimens of Nubian ring money presented to the Society by the late Joseph Bonomi.

Amongst nomadic tribes especially, importance has always been attached to the visibility and portability of wealth, and ornaments for the use of their women offered a convenient form for the gratification of this idea. From the ornament being attached to the woman, it acquired a sort of *taboo* character, and interference with it was considered as an insult to the owner of the female slave. There was the convenience also for making that grand display of material property so dear to an Oriental mind, and the further advantage of an easy removal and negotiation in case of an urgent need.

Egyptian gold rings are to be seen in the University Museum at Leyden, and the same character of ornamental currency may be noted even in European countries.

An Icelandic writer of the twelfth century, Snorro Sturleson, speaks of a marriage dowry consisting of 'three large farms and a gold collar.' Cæsar tells us that 'the Gauls used for money gold and iron rings of

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certain weight,' and a similar statement he makes in relation to Britain.

Casual mention has already been made of Irish ring money. In bronze these rings have been found commencing in weight from exactly one half-penny weight, and rising in regular proportion from that up to twelve ounces.

The rings are sometimes interlaced in the form of a chain, or hooked together by hooks at the end, and in some cases they possess flat cymbal-like ends, which were intended to be brought firmly together. It is therefore not difficult to imagine the meaning of the passages mentioned as having reference to the use of ring money amongst the ancient Israelites.

From the very earliest times the precious metals were used as representative of wealth. Abraham came up from Egypt 'very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold' (Gen. xiii. 2 and xxiv. 35), and that this bullion was used in commerce there is an early proof in Gen. xvii. 13, where money (כֶּסֶף *keseph*) is spoken of as the price of a slave. The purchase by Abraham of the Cave of Machpelah for four hundred shekels of silver weighed out to Ephron 'current with the merchant' (LXX. δοκίμου ἐμπόροις), is a more important example of the same method.

It is evident that pieces of metal of recognized value were re-weighed out by the purchaser to the seller of the land, and in the presence of witnesses. There are many similar instances of this use of money

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by weight. Abimelech gave to Sarah a thousand pieces of silver (Gen. xx. 16). The Philistines paid to Delilah eleven hundred pieces of silver (Judges xvi. 5, 18); Micah, to his mother, the same amount (Judges xvii. 2); the Ishmaelites to Joseph's brethren, twenty pieces (Gen. xxxvii. 28), and the Syrian to Gehazi (2 Kings v. 23) money by weight.

By the laws of Moses, men and cattle (Lev. xxvii. 3; Num. iii. 47), the possession of houses and fields (Lev. xxvii. 16), purchase of provisions (Deut. ii. 6, 28 and xiv. 26), and all fines for offences (Exod. xxi. and xxii.) were regulated and determined by the value of silver.

The contributions to the Tabernacle (Exod. xxx. 13 and xxxviii. 26), the sacrifices of animals (Lev. v. 15), the redemption of the first-born (Num. iii. 50 and xviii. 16), and the payment to the seer (1 Sam. ix. 8) were similarly regulated by weight of silver. In none of these instances is any reference intended to money in the form of coin, but to silver by weight. The words shekel or talent in every case refer to a weight. It must, however, be noted that although there are references to a considerable bulk of silver, yet such bulk consisted of separate pieces, which although not issued by a constituted authority, yet must have possessed separate and distinct recognized value.

Mr. Madden, who is above every one else in this country the authority upon this branch of Oriental Numismatics, draws particular attention to the

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603,550 half shekels accumulated by the contribution of each Israelite for the tabernacle work (Exod. xxxviii. 26). Each individual half shekel named in this passage could hardly have been separately weighed.

Then again, in Exod. xxx. 13 we read of a *half* shekel as a contribution for the atonement, 'the rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less,' and in 1 Sam. ix. 7, 8 we learn that the *fourth* part of a shekel, an individual amount of recognized value, was all the silver that the servant of Saul had with him with which to pay the seer. Later on we shall find that the word shekel, which in every one of the foregoing passages is a weight, becomes the name for an actual coin.

Exactly the same change as to the word AS in Roman use from weight to coin took place, and an analogous case is the use in English of the word *pound*.

We have therefore in use at this period of time, as weight for silver—the shekel, which is estimated to have weighed about 9 dwt. Troy, which at 5*s.* oz. in silver would give an approximate value of about 2*s.* 3*d.*, the bekah or half the shekel (Exod. xxxviii. 26), the third part (Nehem. x. 32), the rebah or fourth part (1 Sam. ix. 8), and the gerah or twentieth part (Exod. xxx. 13).

It has been objected that no portion of silver of definite weight, and therefore value, has ever been found in the explorations and excavations that have been carried on in the Holy Land; but the probable

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reason of this fact, which on the face of it is not easy to explain, is that from time to time the money used was remelted before a fresh issue of it. Shaphan the scribe told King Josiah, in 2 Kings xxii. 9 and 2 Chron. xxxiv. 17, 'Thy servants have gathered' (or as in the Vulgate more accurately, *conflaverunt*, 'melted') 'the money that was found in the house.' The same verb is used in Ezek. xxii. 20, where the passage speaks of melting metal in a furnace.

There are two more references to money in the Old Testament which require notice, more especially as the original makes use in these two passages of two separate distinctive words occurring nowhere else in the version.

In 1 Sam. ii. 36, the prophecy concerning the ultimate poverty of Eli's house, speaks of his descendants who shall 'come and crouch for a piece of silver.' Here the phrase is *Agorath keseph* (אֲגוֹרַת כָּסֶף). The Septuagint translates the word *ὀβολὸς ἀργυρίου*, and does the same in the passages where the word gerah occurs in the A.V. (supra, Exod. xxx. 13; Lev. xxvii. 25; Num. iii. 47, xviii. 16; Ezek. xlv. 12), deriving both phrases from the verb *agar* (אָגַר), to collect; and the value of money probably intended by the expression is the very least piece of silver known in use, the gerah or twentieth part of the shekel even, if not less—that is, the coin that would be given to a beggar, as in the present day might be expressed by the words a *sou* or a farthing.

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The other reference is in the Psalms, lxviii. 30, and the word used is *ratsee keseph* (רְצֵי כָּסֶף), which appears nowhere else in the Bible. The verb *rāssăss* evidently is responsible for the expression *ratsee*, and literally means to break or crush. The sound of the word is supposed to represent the sound of breaking. The correct translation of the text is probably 'trampling under foot the pieces (or ingots, or lumps roughly broken off) of silver,' and the allusion is probably to rough lumps of metal having an approximate known value.

There is but little mention of gold as a medium of commerce in the Old Testament. As ornaments having a currency value we have already noticed gold in Exod. iii. 22, jewels of gold borrowed from the Egyptians, and again in Exod. xii. 35. Also the gifts to Rebekah in Gen. xxiv. 22, and other passages of similar character. In Joshua vii. 21 we read of a mass of gold in a wedge or tongue-shaped block stolen by Achan. Its weight is given at 50 shekels (*γλῶσσαν μίαν χρυσῆν*). Naaman took with him on his visit to the King of Israel 6,000 shekels of gold, and David paid to Ornan the Jebusite for his threshing-floor 600 shekels of gold by weight (1 Chron. xxi. 25). Naaman also gave out gold by weight (2 Kings v. 5).

It is doubtful whether the passage in the First Book of Chronicles actually relates to gold at all, as in 2 Sam. xxiv. 24, where the same event is recorded, the

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phrase used is the more ordinary one for 50 shekels of silver. There is a passage in Isaiah naming gold (Isa. xlvi. 6), 'They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance,' and another in Job xxviii. 15, in very similar terms referring to wisdom, 'It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.' Neither of these passages refer to coin, but both to gold in the lump by weight.

It is never safe in dealing with the expressions used in the Old Testament as regards large sums of money, especially in gold, to endeavour to translate them into English value. The Oriental mind had a habit of extravagance and a love for the use of hyperbole and metaphor from the very earliest times, and this must be taken into account. It is very doubtful in many cases whether anything like Western accuracy is intended to be used in Holy Writ, but rather approximate and relative terms, and then it must be borne in mind that we are without definite data as to the value of the precious metals at these remote ages.

It is very uncertain, for example, what the worth of the talent of gold really was. The income of King Solomon, it has been pointed out, is stated to have been an annual one of 666 talents of gold. If the usual estimate is made of 15 talents of silver being equal to a talent of gold, as fifteen shekels of silver were to a shekel of gold, we have a sum amounting to four millions of money per annum, which it must be confessed is

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a very unlikely sum. The weight probably varied in each metal, and the nearest approximate estimate that can be formed puts the talent of gold at 131 lbs. weight, and the talent of silver at 117 lbs., which would give an English value to them of about £6,000 and £400 respectively, and would make the gold and silver shekels of the Old Testament worth respectively forty shillings and three shillings.

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CHAPTER II

COINED MONEY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE first mention in the Bible of what is actually coined money occurs in various passages in the writings of Ezra and Nehemiah (*darkemonim*, Ezra ii. 68, 69; *adarkonim*, Ezra viii. 26, 27; *darkemonim*, Nehem. vii. 70, 72; *adarkonim*, 1 Chron. xxix. 7); and in the Authorized Version the Hebrew words *adarkonim* (אַדַרְכֹנִים, LXX. χρυσοῦ χίλιοι), and *darkemonim* (דַּרְכְּמוֹנִים, LXX. μναῖ), are translated by the use of the word dram.

It is generally agreed that these words have reference to the Persian coin, the daric, a gold coin which probably took its name from the Persian *dara*, signifying king, from the verb *dashtan*, imperative *dâr*, to have, to hold, to possess (hence also Darius). The figure on these coins was of the King of Persia, *per se*, and not of any particular king.

We are now dealing with a time about five hundred years before Christ, and as coined money was first

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struck only some three to four hundred years earlier, we naturally expect to find a coin in the daric of rude structure and simple device.

The obverse has the figure of a king kneeling, armed with bow and javelin, and the reverse has the incuse punch-mark that distinguishes archaic coins, and which preceded any device on that side. Our illustration is of a double daric.

GOLD DARIC.

The coin is of very pure gold, and weighs on the average 130 grains, which in comparison with an English sovereign of 113 grains of gold of lower purity would give its approximate value at £1 2*s*.

The very word 'sovereign,' applied by us both to monarch and coin, is analogous to this word daric, deriving its name from *dara*. These darics were also struck in silver, and to the silver darics of Persia allusion is probably made in Nehem. v. 15, 'beside forty shekels of silver.'

Artaxerxes in B.C. 458 gave a special commission to Ezra, who was just then leaving for Jerusalem, as to the gold and silver in the province (Ezra vii. 16–18), and the king concluded with these words, 'and

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whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and gold, that do after the will of your God.' Upon these words the eminent numismatist, M. de Saulcy, founded his theory that the coin which is figured on page 28—the shekel with its corresponding half-shekel issued in the years 1 to 5—was struck by Ezra. The theory was accepted by another great writer on the subject, Lenormant, and tentatively by Mr. Madden, who in later years changed his opinion. These coins, weighing in the shekel 220 grains, and in the half-shekel 110 grains, read as follows:

Obv.—שקל ישראל *Shekel Israel.* Shekel of Israel= a cup or chalice, and above it the letters שנ year 2.

Rev.—ירושלים הקדושה *Jerushalaim ha-kedoshah*= Jerusalem the Holy; a triple lily.

The question of the exact position in history of these shekels is one of some difficulty, and at present there is no authoritative evidence that once for all will decide it.

This is not the place to review the evidence brought forward to support the rival theories. M. de Saulcy and M. Lenormant place them as issued in Ezra's time, Mr. Madden, M. Six, and Dr. Merzbacher attribute them to Simon Maccabæus. Simon is said to have reigned in Judæa for eight years, but not to have obtained the right of coinage until his fourth year, which right again was quickly taken from him.

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These shekels and half-shekels are of the years 1 to 5, while there do exist copper coins of year 4 *only*, of very different character from the silver, and which were almost certainly struck by Simon. I have carefully reviewed the evidence for and against, and as each writer is responsible for his own conclusions only, my attribution of these silver coins is to the time of Ezra, and the copper ones of the year 4 to Simon Maccabæus.

Accordingly I place these coins as the earliest actual Jewish money.

SHEKEL OF THE TIME OF EZRA.

The device on the obverse is usually supposed to be the cup or pot of manna laid up in the sanctuary. 'And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations' (Exod. xvi. 33).

The device on the reverse is either Aaron's rod that 'budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds' (Num. xvii. 8), and which, like the cup of manna, was laid up before the

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Lord (Num. xvii. 10), or else, as Cavedoni first suggested, it is a lily: 'I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow (i.e. blossom) as the lily' (Hosea xiv. 5). The former attribution is the one, however, more usually accepted by numismatists, and I accept it. It brings both devices into close and intimate connexion, and is the more natural explanation. It would be precious symbolism to the Jews after their exile, reminding them of their history and its great and past events, filling them with hope as to future prosperity and the restoration of their Temple and its worship, and encouraging them in this their initial coinage to look forward with hope. It was the Temple and the Temple service for which they were looking at the time, and every symbol that reminded them of the Tabernacle, of historical continuity of life and service, and of the earlier pages of their history, would be likely to be used by their great leader in a time when so much depended upon unity of purpose, determination, and faith.

As already mentioned, there are shekels and half-shekels for five years, and every coin bears the cup and the rod, while the inscriptions, with very small differences, are as given above in the illustration.

Jerusalem, it will be noted, is termed 'the Holy,' a title given to the city from very early times, and, it is interesting to note, still retained in its present Arabic name *El-Kuds*, the holy. In Isa. xlviii. 2 it is spoken of as 'the holy city,' and again Isa. lii. 1;

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Dan. ix. 24; Joel iii. 17; and, what is more to the purpose, in Nehem. xi. 1, 18, where at this very time we read 'to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city.' The title was evidently a familiar and a favourite one, in use at the very time at which I consider these coins were struck, and the coin but took up the popular phrase for the city that was so intensely beloved by its people.

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CHAPTER III

COINED MONEY OF THE TIME OF THE APOCRYPHA

THE completion of the Book of Malachi is usually, by Bible chronologists, put at 420 B.C., and the period from this time down to the opening of the New Testament is partially covered by the books of the Apocrypha.

In 332 B.C. the kingdom of Persia was conquered by the Napoleon of his time, Alexander the Great; but the Jews not only did not suffer under his rule, but had much cause for regret when he died. Alexander's coinage was chiefly of gold staters and silver tetradrachms, and these coins, especially of the latter class, were struck, according to the conqueror's custom, in the various countries that he subjugated, as typical of the submission of the nations.

There are coins extant of Alexander struck in Palestine at Joppa, Acre, Sycamine in Cæsarea, and Scythopolis in Samaria, known also as Beth-shan.

I illustrate a fine tetradrachm of Alexander. At

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the death of Alexander there was considerable dispute as to his possessions, and the Jews, whose country lay

TETRADRACHM OF ALEXANDER.

between Syria and Egypt, had much cause for complaint during the internecine struggle.

For a while their country was harassed by both nations, and the coinage used in the land embraces that issued by the Seleucidæ (Syrians) and the

TETRADRACHM OF SELEUCUS I NICATOR.

Ptolemies (Egypt). Of the former series the coin I illustrate is a tetradrachm of Seleucus I Nicator,

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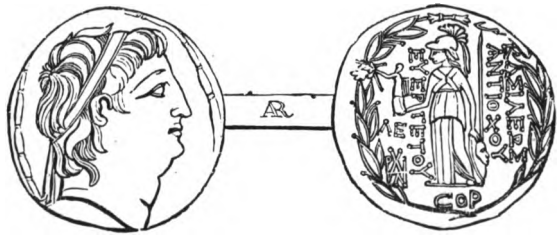
B.C. 312–280, bearing on it the title of the King 'Seleucus' ΣΕΛΕΥΚΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ, by and under the figure, and under the seat of the chair the letters ΔΙ, initials of the name Diospolis, where the coin was struck, the town being familiarly termed Lydda, and named in Acts ix. 32, 35, 38. These coins of the Seleucidæ were also struck in Tyre, Sidon, Ascalon and other towns.

The next illustration is of a later Syrian coin issued by the King Antiochus VII, surnamed Sidetes, or the hunter, and Euergetes, B.C. 138–127. It represents on the obverse the head of the king, and



TETRADRACHM OF ANTIOCHUS EUERGETES.

on the reverse the words ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΝΤΙΟΧΟΥ ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ, '(Money) of the King Antiochus Euergetes.' This title, meaning benefactor, is of peculiar interest, because used by our Lord in Luke xxii. 25, when He, speaking of those exercising authority, gives them the title of benefactors. The device is Minerva holding Victoria.

It is needless in a work of this kind to review the

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history of the invasions of Judæa under the Kings of Syria and Egypt, and it is well to pass on to the revolution of the Jews against their persecutors, led by a priest named Mattathias, whose son Judas Maccabæus attained great notoriety, and from whose family came the Herodian dynasty.

This family, in the persons both of the father himself and his two sons, Judas, surnamed Maccabæus, or the Hammerer (מקבה 'a hammer'), and Jonathan, who succeeded him, successfully led the Jews against their enemies, defeating them over and over again, and obtaining from them a measure of liberty.

The second son, Simon, who after the death of Jonathan formed a treaty with Demetrius II, King of Syria, became high priest and leader of the Jews, and to him was given the very important right of coining money.

Judæa under Simon enjoyed prosperity and peace. In B.C. 140 Demetrius was captured by Mithridates I, King of Parthia, and the usurper Tryphon having been expelled, Antiochus VII ascended the throne. He at once renewed the treaty with Simon, and he it was, whose coin is depicted above, who granted the high priest the right of coinage. 'I give thee leave also,' says he, 'to coin money for thy country, with thine own stamp': Καὶ ἐπέτρεψά σοι ποιῆσαι κόμμα ἴδιον νόμισμα τῇ χώρᾳ σου (1 Macc. xv. 6).

The coins issued in accordance with this decree were in all probability those of copper issued in the

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fourth year. The shekels of Ezra, in silver, were still in existence, and these coins of Simon were for the half, quarter, and sixth parts of a shekel. The decree neither states nor implies that no earlier coins were issued.

The half shekel and the sixth of the shekel are illustrated, and putting the Hebrew inscriptions into English lettering, I give the inscriptions on all three of the coins.

HALF SHEKEL (COPPER) OF SIMON MACCABÆUS.

Obv.—Shenath arba Chatzi = In the fourth year—one-half.
Two bunches of thickly-leaved branches, between which is a citron.

Rev.—Ligullath Zion = The redemption of Zion.
A palm-tree between two baskets filled with dates and other fruits.

Quarter shekel (not illustrated)—

Obv.—Shenath arba Rebia = In the fourth year—one-quarter.
Two bundles of branches (*lulab*).

Rev.—Ligullath Zion = The redemption of Zion.
A citron (*ethrog*).

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SIXTH OF SHEKEL (COPPER) OF SIMON MACCABÆUS.

Obv.—Shenath arba = In the fourth year.
A bundle of branches between two citrons.
Rev.—Ligullath Zion = The redemption of Zion.
A cup or chalice.

We have already said that the right was given to Simon in the fourth year, and very speedily removed from him. These coins are known of the fourth year only.

The palm-tree of Palestine is a symbol of great interest. The palm branches are those alluded to in connexion with the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. xxiii. 40), and the baskets with the dates probably refer to the first-fruits. The citron, or *ethrog*, was by custom of the Jews carried with the palm branches, or *lulab*, on the Feast of Tabernacles; and, as Madden points out, the various emblems have reference also to the prosperity, peace, and productiveness of the country under Simon. One coin is known, countermarked with an elephant, the work of the Syrian king, but the series have not a feature in common with the older silver coinage, save perhaps the cup, which in the copper coin is very different in shape, jewelled, and more of a temple service vessel than the archaic form of the older coinage.

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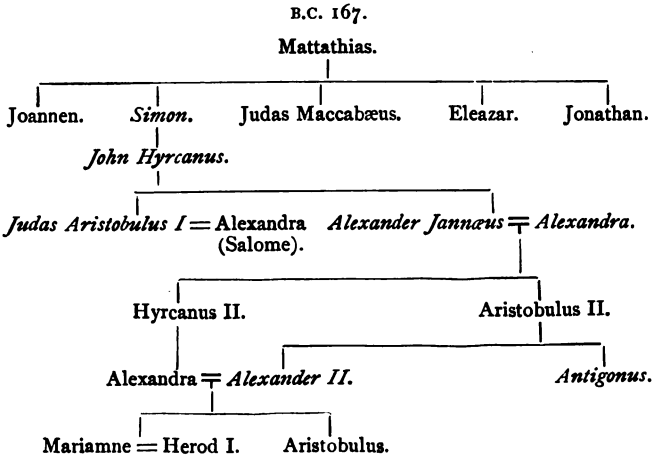
These are clearly the Maccabæan coins. Inasmuch as this is not a detailed history of Jewish coinage, it will be unnecessary to pass in review every coin struck by successive high priests or rulers of the Asmonæan dynasty.

A brief pedigree is appended, however, in order to explain the descent of the Herodian dynasty, and to guard against a possible confusion between the various rulers having the common name of Herod. Of the Maccabæan rulers there are coins known of those whose names are *in italics*, i. e. Simon, as above, John Hyrcanus, Judas Aristobulus, Alexander Jannæus, and his wife Alexandra, Alexander II, and Antigonus, and then we come to the Herodian rulers.

PEDIGREE SHOWING THE ASMONÆAN DYNASTY.



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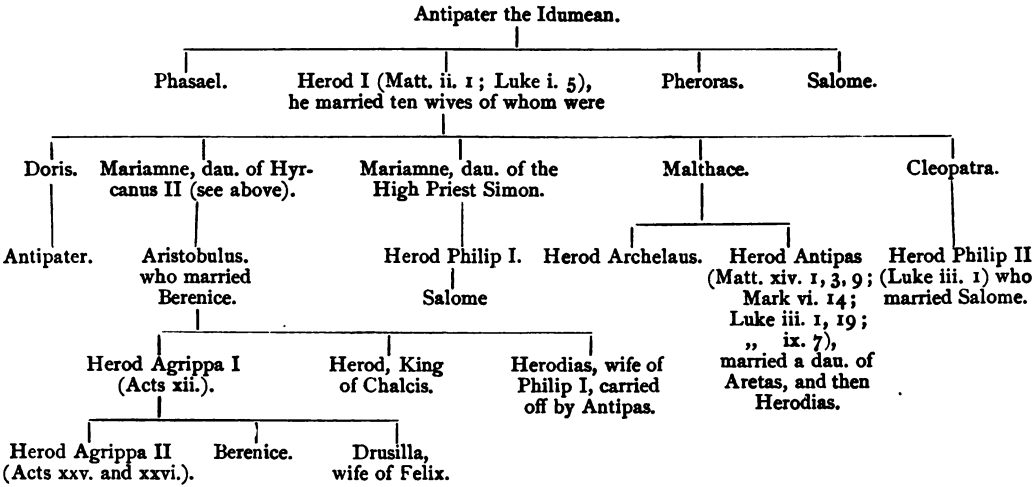
Antipater the Idumean.
Phasael.
Herod I (Matt. ii. 1; Luke i. 5), he married ten wives of whom were
Pheroras.
Salome.
Doris.
Mariamne, dau. of Hyrcanus II (see above).
Mariamne, dau. of the High Priest Simon.
Malthace.
Cleopatra.
Antipater.
Aristobulus. who married Berenice.
Herod Philip I.
Salome
Herod Archelaus.
Herod Antipas (Matt. xiv. 1, 3, 9; Mark vi. 14; Luke iii. 1, 19; „ ix. 7), married a dau. of Aretas, and then Herodias.
Herod Philip II (Luke iii. 1) who married Salome.
Herod Agrippa I (Acts xii.).
Herod, King of Chalcis.
Herodias, wife of Philip I, carried off by Antipas.
Herod Agrippa II (Acts xxv. and xxvi.).
Berenice.
Drusilla, wife of Felix.

NOTE.—The main lines of the genealogy only are given. The several names of lesser importance are omitted, to keep the table clear.

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Doubtless the little copper coins issued by these pontifical rulers were of great value commercially, as they were the only home coinage of the Jews for small values. They bear on one side the name of the ruler, and on the other a double cornucopia.

John Hyrcanus succeeded his father in B.C. 135 as high priest, but was more a politician than a priest, and the struggle at this time on the part of the ruler was to assume princely if not kingly power, and to do it without offending the prejudices of the Jews, who hated the very idea of an independent sovereign.

With this purpose these rulers associated with their title of high priest the so-called senate or confederation of the Jews; but little by little the power left the senate and vested in the ruler, who gradually assimilated his position more and more to that of a king.

The devices, which on the earliest coins, as has been shown, related to the unity of Jewish life with its past history, and the sacred character and holiness of its service and city—in the later coins to the revival of Temple worship, the feasts and ritual of the Temple, and the general prosperity of the land when 'the earth gave her increase' (1 Macc. xiv. 8), now were of a totally different character.

The cornucopia and the poppy-head, the Syrian anchor and the star, are now found; and in later Herodian days devices of a wholly profane character appear. The coin was becoming more and more heathen, less and less of the sacred Jewish character,

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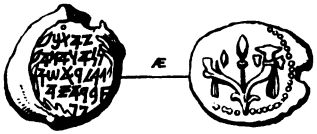
and although up to this time the old sacred language had been continued, yet a little while after it will be found that even that was gradually dropped.

A new family of rulers now enters the scene, and heathen worship and heathen custom, repudiated by the earlier Maccabees, are adopted as part of the regular life and type of the Jews.

The coin of John Hyrcanus depicted may be thus described: the long Hebrew inscription, which I give in English characters, filling the obverse of the coin—



COIN OF JOHN HYRCANUS.

Obv. — *Jehochanan Hakkohen Haggadol Rosh Cheber Hajehudim* = Johanan the High Priest and Prince of the Senate of the Jews. Within a wreath of olive.

Rev.—Two cornucopiæ, between which is a poppy-head.

Judas Aristobulus, his son, who succeeded him, issued but few coins, as he only reigned for one year. His coin reads as follows—

Obv.—*Jehudah Cohen Gadol Vecheber Hajehudim* = Judas the High Priest and the Senate of the Jews.

Rev.—Very similar to the last.

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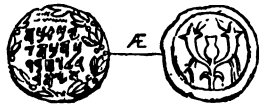
The illustration shows two obverses very slightly differing one from the other.

COIN OF JUDAS ARISTOBULUS.

Alexander Jannæus was the next ruler (B.C. 105–78), and he at once married Salome (or Alexandra in Greek), the wife of his deceased brother Judas. In his reign a great rebellion between Pharisees and Sadducees took place, which was quelled only after great slaughter, and the king was pelted with *ethrogs* (citrons). Two coins struck by this ruler are illustrated, as they mark an epoch in Jewish coinage.

The first is very similar to those already depicted, and reads—*Jonathan Hakkohen Haggadol Vecheber Hajehudim* = Jonathan the High Priest and the Senate of the Jews.



COIN OF ALEXANDER JANNÆUS.

The other has two new features. The hated name of king is boldly assumed, and on the reverse of the bilingual coins appears for the first time Greek

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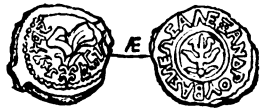
characters. This coin was probably one of the great causes of the revolt to which I have just alluded.



COIN OF ALEXANDER JANNÆUS (WITH TITLE OF KING).

It is not necessary to review either the events of the reigns of the rulers who successively followed Jannæus or the coins issued by them. The time was one of insurrection and rebellion. John Hyrcanus II sat on the throne on three successive occasions. In the intervals his brothers or other relatives drove him away and took his place, and then his party asserting its supremacy he returned.

Alexandra, the wife of Jannæus, reigned for a while, and after her death her son John Hyrcanus succeeded. Aristobulus II, Alexander II, and Antigonus also reigned, the latter being defeated in B.C. 37 by Herod I, the Idumæan, who had married the niece of Antigonus; and with his death in Rome in B.C. 37 the Asmonæan dynasty ended, and the first of the evil brood of Herods reigned over Judæa.

There were many coins issued of this period, but there is little service in illustrating them, and attention must now be directed to the money of the New Testament under the Herodian dynasty.

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CHAPTER IV

NEW TESTAMENT MONEY. COINS OF THE HERODS

DURING the reign of the last Asmonæan ruler Judæa came fully under the power of Rome, and Antigonus with his father and elder brother were carried prisoners by Pompey to Rome. Antipater the Idumæan, under the Romans, had been actual ruler for some time previous to this, and his two sons Phasael and Herod were governing in Jerusalem and Galilee. By the help of the Parthians, Antigonus, escaping from Rome, regained his throne for a brief space, but eventually Jerusalem was again besieged and taken. Antigonus was then executed by the Romans at Antioch, and Herod I, surnamed the Great, permitted as a feudatory vassal to ascend the throne.

The names of Herod and his sons and descendants are so familiar to students of Holy Scripture, that although the coins they actually issued are not specifically named in the New Testament, yet so important are the issuers in its history, that it is

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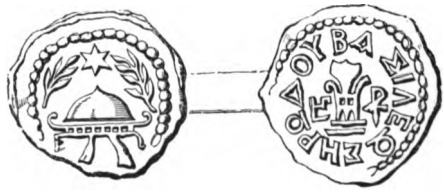
desirable some reference in detail should be made to their coins. The coins depicted show for the first time inscriptions wholly in Greek, not Hebrew, characters, and those of the Herods are of copper only.

Herod I (surnamed the Great), B.C. 37–4, was the builder of the beautiful Temple, and he it was who ordered the massacre of the infants at Bethlehem. His cruelties were atrocious, and despite the erection of the Temple he failed to win the least affection from the people over whom he ruled, and died in torment, universally hated.

The coin illustrated is a remarkable piece.



COIN OF HEROD I (YEAR 3 = B.C. 37).

On the obverse is a vessel with a bell-shaped cover and stand, above it a star, and on either side what are probably palm branches.

The reverse reads ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΗΡΩΔΟΥ, and bears a tripod, to the left of which are the letters L Γ signifying the third year, and to the right the monogram ꟻ.

It is impossible to say what the curious device on the obverse actually represents. No one of the many writers on the subject have succeeded in determining

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this moot question. Cavedoni with great probability suggests that it is the censer carried by the high priest once a year on the solemn Day of Atonement into the Holy of Holies, and that as Herod conquered Jerusalem on the very Day of Atonement, the device would be appropriate, especially as a mark of indignity toward the Jews.

The two palm branches may allude also to this victory, or, as Cavedoni again suggests, to the 'two olive trees' of Zechariah's vision (Zech. iv. 3, 12). The tripod shows Herod's paganizing spirit, and was adapted from heathen coins. The year 3, if counted from Herod's receipt of the title of King of Judæa from the Romans, would make the date 716 (B.C. 37). There is a division of opinion again as to the monogram. Cavedoni calls it the *Crux ansata*, employed both on Egyptian and Assyrian monuments as the sign of life. De Saulcy, on the contrary, says it is a mark of value, T and P, a contraction for TPιᾶς (three), or rather TPίχαλκον. Nothing now remains to refer to on the coin but the star, and this is certainly a remarkable object. Cavedoni suggests that, like the censer, it also refers to the victory over Jerusalem; but there is just the possibility remaining that it has some connexion either with the prophecy as to the arising of a star in the East, or to the expectation of some wonderful astronomical phenomenon, or merely to an assumption by Herod, in ridicule of the position of Him whose

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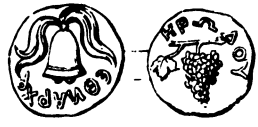
birth was to be foreshadowed by the appearance of a star. It may be equivalent to the announcement by Herod of his rulership or messiahship of Israel, a profane sneer at Jewish expectations, or the prophecy which the Jews believed. It is certainly interesting to find a large single noticeable star upon a coin of Herod.

Herod Archelaus, of whom Joseph was afraid, came to the kingdom upon the death of his father. He was, however, only named ethnarch or ruler of the nation by Augustus, with the promise of the title of king thereafter, if he reigned virtuously. He is the only prince of Judæa who bore the title of ethnarch, which in 2 Cor. xi. 32 is a title given to the King of Damascus: 'The governor under Aretas the ethnarch kept the city.' Archelaus reigned over Judæa, Idumæa and Samaria. His coin reads as follows:—



COIN OF ARCHELAUS.

Obv.—HPΩΔOY, a bunch of grapes and a leaf.

Rev.—EΘNAPXOY, a helmet with tuft of feathers and cheek pieces.

Next follows Herod Antipas (B.C. 4–A.D. 39). This is Herod the tetrarch (Matt. xiv. 1–3; Luke

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iii. 1, 19; ix. 7), Herod the king (Matt. xiv. 9), and King Herod (Mark vi. 14).

It was before this king that our Blessed Lord was sent for examination when Pilate heard that He was a Galilean, as Herod was tetrarch of Galilee. Pilate had engaged in several disputes with the Galileans, and was not on good terms with Herod. In connexion with the transfer of our Blessed Lord to the jurisdiction of Herod, the long-standing quarrel between the procurator and the king was made up, and Herod and Pilate again became friends (Luke xxiii. 12). This is the monarch whose craftiness is alluded to by our Lord in the words, 'Go ye and tell that fox' (Luke xiii. 32).

He married first the daughter of the Arabian king Aretas, but when on a visit to his half-brother Philip, he persuaded his brother's wife Herodias to consent to a secret union with him. The Arabian princess, justly incensed, returned to her father. Herod, under the influence of this new wife, whose union with him was soon made public, beheaded St. John Baptist. Aretas, to revenge the insult to the honour of his daughter, made war against Herod, and defeated him with great loss, but was compelled by the power of Rome to desist from warring against the Roman vassal. Herod was the founder and builder of the city of Tiberias, named in honour of his patron, the evil Emperor Tiberius. After the death of that emperor, Herod journeyed to Rome to obtain the

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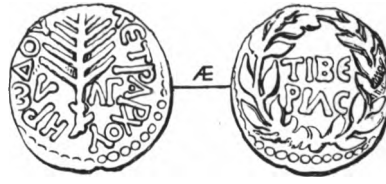
title of king, which he had already wrongfully assumed, but which had been given to his nephew Agrippa I. In consequence, however, of the opposition of Agrippa, Herod was deprived of his power, and with Herodias, who stoutly refused to forsake him in his misfortune, was banished to Lyons, and afterwards removing to Spain died in that country.

St. Luke's words in iii. 19, 'for all the evils which Herod had done,' attribute many wicked deeds to this monarch. Of his fear and perplexity when he heard of our Lord, we read in the same Gospel (ix. 7): 'Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by Him: and he was perplexed,' &c. He it was also who endeavoured by his emissaries to persuade our Lord



COIN OF HEROD ANTIPAS (YEAR 33 = A.D. 29).

to flee into Judæa, by the threat that 'Herod wishes to kill Thee.' It was of this evil ruler, and of his influence, that the note of warning was sounded, 'Beware of the leaven of Herod' (Mark viii. 15).

The coin of Herod Antipas depicted reads:—

Obv.—HPΩΔOY TETPAPXOY, a palm branch and the letters L ΛΓ (year 33).

Rev.—TIBEPIAC in two lines within a wreath.

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There is a solitary mention in St. Luke's Gospel of Herod Philip II, under the name of Philip the tetrarch, Φιλίππου τετραρχοῦντος 'his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituræa' (iii. 1); and the reader must be very careful not to confuse this tetrarch with the Philip, first husband of Herodias, to whom allusion has already been made.

Philip I, the brother of Antipas, is named three times in the Gospels (Matt. xiv. 3, Mark vi. 17, Luke iii. 19), in each case the same phrase being used, 'his brother Philip's wife.' Of this prince there are no coins known.

The second Philip named by St. Luke reigned from

COIN OF HEROD PHILIP II (YEAR 37 = A.D. 33).

B.C. 4 to A.D. 34. He was the son of Herod I by Cleopatra, and he married Salome, daughter of Herod Philip I by Herodias. His coins are remarkable as bearing the effigy of the Roman emperor, a grave infringement of the Mosaic Law; but they were struck at Cæsarea Philippi, some distance from Jerusalem, and their issuer was hardly the man, as Mr. Madden points out, to study the dictates of Mosaic Law when anxious to flatter the Roman power. The coin here represented reads as follows:—

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Obv.—The head of Tiberius to the right, bare, and before it a branch of laurel.

ΤΙΒΕΡΙΟC CΕΒΑCΤΟC ΚΑΙCΑΡ = Tiberius.

Rev.— ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ ΤΕΤ[ΡΑΡΧΟΥ] = Philip the Tetrarch; a temple, and between the columns L Λ Z (year 37, i.e. A.D. 33–34).

The grandson of Herod I, named Herod Agrippa, had been, during the lives of the rulers to whom reference has already been made, conspiring to obtain their kingdom. In high favour at Rome with the emperor, he prevented Antipas obtaining the title of king, and when Antipas was banished, obtained the rulership of Galilee and Peræa. Already he possessed Trachonitis and two other provinces. In A.D. 41 the Emperor Claudius gave him Judæa, Samaria, and Libanus, and with these additions he was practically master of the entire dominions that had been governed by Herod I. He was the son, it will be noted from the pedigree, of Aristobulus and Berenice. He was a popular sovereign with the Jews, lived constantly in Jerusalem, and gave strict attention to the observances and regulations of his people.

It was probably from a desire to increase this popularity that he 'stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the Church' (Acts xii. 1). He it was who caused St. James to be beheaded, and threw St. Peter into prison; and the chapter that records these events records also his death. At Cæsarea, at the great games which he arranged in honour of the emperor, he ap-

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peared, according to Josephus, in a garment 'made wholly of silver, and of a contexture truly wonderful .... and the silver of his garment being illuminated by the sun shone out after a surprising manner, and was resplendent as to spread a horror over those that looked intently upon him.' His flatterers saluted him as a god, and Josephus adds, 'the king did neither rebuke them nor reject their impious flattery.' The sacred narrative sums up the conclusion of the tragedy in these words: 'And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost' (Acts xii. 23).

The story appears in Eusebius as well as in Josephus, differing only in small details, and it is evident that the attack that caused the king's death was very sudden, and looked upon both by king and people as a Divine rebuke to such gross impiety. The account in the Acts of the Apostles should be compared with the ninth chapter of the Second Book of Maccabees. The description there is of the terrible death of Antiochus Epiphanes of the same fell disease. From this king, who, like Herod Agrippa, had termed himself a god on his coins, and received the flattering praise of his courtiers, came the touching words: 'It is meet to be subject unto God, and that a man that is mortal should not proudly think of himself as if he were God' (2 Macc. ix. 12).

The strictly Jewish coin depicted of Agrippa bears

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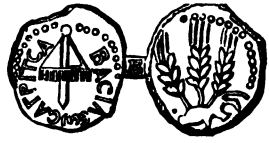
on it a remarkable device. It may be a tent or tabernacle, and have some reference to the Feast of Tabernacles, or, as Levy suggests, with more probability, it is an umbrella, the usual sign of dignity in the East.



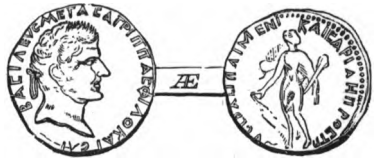
COIN OF HEROD AGRIPPA I (YEAR 6 = A.D. 37).

The coin reads:—

Obv.—ΒΑCΙΛΕΩC ΑΓΡΙΠΠΑ = King Agrippa; an umbrella.

Rev.—Three ears of corn springing from one stalk, and on either side the letters L S (year 6).

Another coin of Agrippa is depicted, as the title that the king gives to himself upon it is the one to



COIN OF HEROD AGRIPPA I.

which allusion is made in John xix. 12, 'If thou let this Man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend.' The coin reads:—

Obv.—ΒΑCΙΛΕΥC ΜΕΓΑC ΑΓΡΙΠΠΑC ΦΙΛΟ-ΚΑΙCΑΡ = King Agrippa, the great lover of Cæsar; head of Agrippa to the right.

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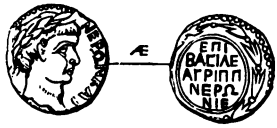
Rev.—KAICAPIA H ΠΡΟC [CEBACTΩ] ΛIMENI= Cæsarea near the port of Augustus; Fortune standing to the left, holding rudder and cornucopia.

The last prince of the race to whom allusion need be made is Agrippa II, A. D. 48–100. He was the son of Herod Agrippa I and Cypros. Claudius gave him various tetrarchies with the title of king, and Nero augmented his kingdom with possessions in Galilee. In A.D. 60, Agrippa II, with his sister Berenice, visited the Roman governor Festus at Cæsarea, and there the Apostle St. Paul was brought before him. At this interview Agrippa made the well-known and contemptuous remark to St. Paul, 'Thou wilt soon persuade me to be a Christian' (Acts xxv. 13; xxvi. 2, 28). (Conybeare and Howson, *Life of St. Paul*, ii. 367.)



COIN OF HEROD AGRIPPA II.

The coin illustrated was struck by Agri ppa in the time of Nero. Agrippa's long reign was coincident with that of several emperors of Rome, and his coins are therefore found bearing the effigies of several emperors. He reigned during the time in which the Roman throne was occupied successively by Claudius,

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Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, Nerva, Trajan. The coin illustrated reads:—

Obv.—NEPΩN KAI[CAP]=Nero Cæsar; head of Nero to the right.

Rev.—ΕΠΙ ΒΑCΙΛΕ ΑΓΡΙΠΠ ΝΕΡΩ ΝΙΕ, which may be read as, Money of Agrippa struck at Neronias. The words are within an olive wreath.

Agrippa changed the name of the town of Cæsarea Philippi to Neronias, in honour of the emperor his patron.

Ruling side by side with the Herodian princes were the procurators or governors whom the Roman emperors set over Judæa as their especial representatives.

It was after the deposition of Archelaus in A. D. 6 that Judæa proper was reduced to the level of an ordinary Roman province. St. Luke's Gospel (ii. 1, 2) refers to Cyrenius as governor of Syria, which at that time was a similar Roman province, having its own governor, as Judæa had.

The Acts of the Apostles (xxiii. 26) gives the names of Claudius Felix, and (xxiv. 27) of Porcius Festus; but more important than either of these governors was the infamous Pontius Pilate. The rule of the Roman governors in Judæa lasted from A. D. 6 to 58, and there were but fourteen of them in all. Many of them struck coins during their governorship, and these coins must have been in constant circulation during

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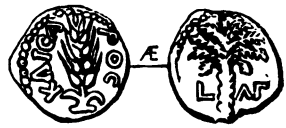
the time of the life of our Lord. The distinct subserviency of the governor to Rome and his flattery of the reigning emperor is well shown by these coins.

Coponius was the first procurator, and it was during his governorship that our Lord was discovered in the Temple hearing the doctors and asking them questions (Luke ii. 40–50). His coin is depicted—

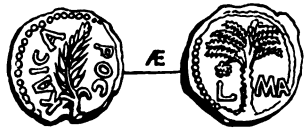


COIN OF PROCURATOR COPONIUS.

Obv.—KAICAPOC = of Cæsar or Cæsar's, that is, Money of Cæsar or Cæsar's money; an ear of corn.

Rev.—L ΛΓ (λυκάβας), year 33; a palm-tree, from which hang bunches of dates.

The third procurator, Annius Rufus, governed from A. D. 12 to 15, and was superseded directly Tiberius ascended the throne. This was during the boyhood of our Lord.



COIN OF PROCURATOR ANNIUS RUFUS (YEAR 41 = A.D. 14).

The coin depicted was struck by him in the year A. D. 14. It reads—

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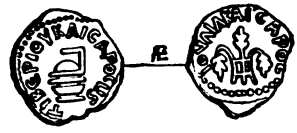
Obv.—KAICAPOC, as above.

Rev.—A palm-tree with dates and L MA (year 41, i. e. A. D. 14).

The next illustration is of the coin of Pontius Pilate.



COIN OF PONTIUS PILATE.

Obv.—TIBEPIOY KAICAPOC L IS=[Money] of Tiberius Cæsar, year 16 (A. D. 29.)

The device is said to be that of a sacred vessel presented to the Temple by Tiberius.

Rev.—IOYAIA KAICAPOC = Money of Julia Cæsar; three ears of millet bound together.

Julia was the mother of Tiberius, and possessed at the time of Pilate great and exceptional power.

The coins of the procurators do not exhibit the signs and symbols of heathen worship, as those of the Herodians did; but the religious scruples of the Jews were considered, and the coins struck bore in most cases symbols that would not be abhorrent to the people over whom the governors were set.

Of Felix and Festus the Acts of the Apostles speak. Felix was mean and cruel, and his readiness to receive a bribe is mentioned in the description of the imprisonment of St. Paul (Acts xxiv. 26). His wife Drusilla is also named in the narrative, and was

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with him at Cæsarea (Acts xxiv. 24). Felix did some good service to the country, clearing it of impostors, rogues and vagabonds, and to his good deeds Tertullus in his oration bore witness (Acts xxiv. 2).

Porcius Festus, with whom Agrippa stayed, succeeded Felix in A.D. 60, but died in A.D. 62.

Albinus and Gessius Florus succeeded him, and with the last infamous man the rule of the procurators ceased.

It may be well in the very hasty review that I am making of the numismatic history of the Jewish people, to delay for a space consideration as to the revolts of the Jews against the Roman power that followed the rule of Gessius Florus, and led to the ultimate conquest of Jerusalem.

Consideration will now be given to the money actually named in the New Testament.

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CHAPTER V

THE COINS ACTUALLY NAMED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

THERE are certain Greek coins named in the New Testament that claim first attention. I have already referred to the complicated condition of Jewish money in the time of our Lord. Currency must have consisted of a great variety of coins—money of Greece, imperial money of Rome, Herodian money, money struck by the Roman procurators, Roman provincial money, as of Syria and Antioch, actual Jewish money struck by the Asmonæan dynasty and Herodian rulers, and very possibly coins, still remaining in occasional use, of silver as struck by Ezra. It is the fact that representatives of almost all these varying currencies are named in the New Testament, and that some sort of adjustment of value existed between one coin and another, that renders so puzzling to a novice the allusions in the New Testament to coins. It may at the outset be pointed out that according to the value of

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silver, a rough table had been drawn up at the time of our Lord as to the corresponding value of these various coins. Thus:—

a. A Greek *dram* or *drachma*, the piece of money lost by the woman, was about equal in value to the Roman *denarius* 'penny,' or civil tribute money.

b. Two of these Greek *drams* formed a *didrachma*, which was the sacred tribute money (not Roman), the payment toward the Temple sustenance, willingly paid by every Jew (Matt. xvii. 24). This coin also about equalled in value half a shekel, which was the old Temple tribute.

c. Four of the Greek *drams* formed a *tetradrachma*, which equalled four *denarii* (or pennies in the Authorized Version), the Roman tribute; or two *didrachmas*, the sacred Jewish tribute; or one *stater*, the coin found in the fish's mouth (Matt. xvii. 27).

We therefore arrive at this table of varying equivalents:—

1 Greek drachma or dram = 1 Roman denarius or penny.
2 Greek drachmæ or drams = 2 denarii = 1 didrachma = half a shekel.
4 Greek drachmæ or drams = 4 denarii = 1 tetradrachma = 2 didrachmæ = 1 stater = 1 shekel.

To take the unit first.

The Greek drachma is but once mentioned in the New Testament: 'Either what woman having ten pieces of silver (δραχμὰς δέκα).'— Luke xv. 8.

The coin in our currency at the price of silver would be in value about eightpence.

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This coin, as shown above, is about equal to the Roman denarius, penny or tribute money.

The next coin is the one double in value to the last. It is the didrachm or didrachma, equal in value to two drachmæ or two denarii, and about equal to half a Jewish shekel. This was the voluntary, willing tribute money of half a shekel paid by the Jews towards the sustenance of the Temple (Exod. xxx. 13, 15).

It is found demanded in the reign of Joash (2 Chron. xxiv. 9). On account of the poverty of the people it was reduced, in the time of Nehemiah, to a third of a shekel (Nehem. x. 32); but it comes back in New Testament times to half a shekel, equivalent at that time to a didrachma. *προσῆλθον οἱ τὰ δίδραχμα λαμβάνοντες τῷ Πέτρῳ* (Matt. xvii. 24, 27).

This was a tribute not enforced by law, and therefore the words of our Blessed Lord have a marked and wonderful significance: 'Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children or of strangers?' Taking the same reckoning as adopted heretofore, we may place this coin as worth about one shilling and fourpence.

Next the four-drachm piece claims attention. This is equal to four denarii, and about equal to a Jewish shekel. It is called a tetradrachm or stater, and is the coin found by St. Peter in the mouth of the fish, sufficient to pay the Temple tribute for two persons. *καὶ ἀνοίξας τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ εὑρήσεις στατῆρα* (Matt. xvii. 27).

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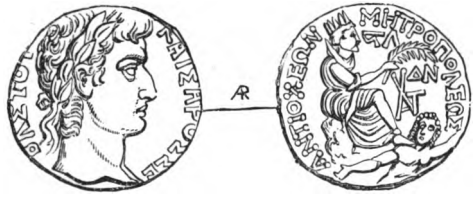
As a proof of the minute accuracy of the evangelist, it should be noted that the didrachm had at the time fallen into disuse; and Mr. Poole points out that had two didrachmæ been found in the fish, the receivers of tribute would hardly have accepted them, but the stater actually found was their equivalent, and gladly taken. The stater illustrated is of Antioch.



STATER OF AUGUSTUS.

The obverse reads (translated) '[Money] of Cæsar Augustus,' and has the laureated head of the emperor.

The reverse shows the genius of the city seated with her foot upon a figure representing the river-god Orontes, and the words the 30th year of the victory [i.e. Actium]. The word stater means simply *standard*, a coin of a certain full and definite weight; and the use of the word in this instance is to a scholar very strong evidence that the Gospel of St. Matthew was written in about the first century, when coins the equivalent of a pure silver tetradrachm were known as staters.

Another stater which is here illustrated is one of the staters of Rhodes, bearing on the obverse the

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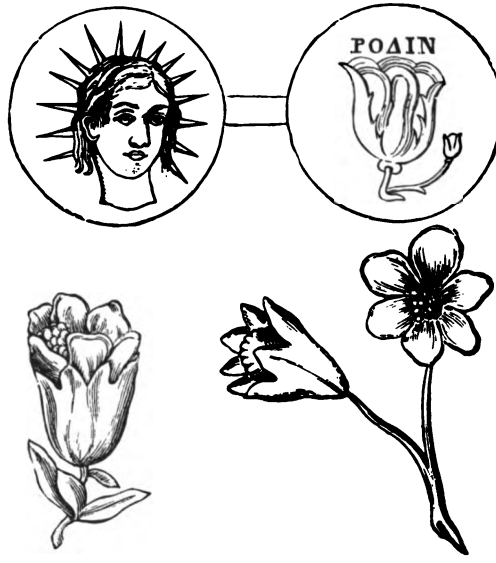
head of Apollo, god of day and patron of the island, and on the reverse an opening eastern rose, ῥόδον, a play upon the name of the place Ῥόδος, engraved on the coin as **POΔIN**. The references to the Isle of Rhodes in the Acts of the Apostles (xxi. 1) and



STATER OF RHODES, WITH FLOWERS.

to the maid Rhoda (xii. 13), give an interest to this coin, as well as the references in the Bible to the rose—The rose of Sharon (Cant. ii. 1) and 'The desert shall blossom as the rose' (Isa. xxxv. 1). The flower that is named differs considerably from our English rose.

The value of a stater in English money according

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to the scale that I have adopted, may be roughly taken at two shillings and eightpence. The lesson that our Divine Lord taught specially in the miracle by which the stater was produced is a very clear one. 'If earthly kings do not receive tribute from their children,' would be our Lord's argument to St. Peter, 'then am I who am the Son of God excused by their custom from paying anything to God. Nevertheless, lest we should give them the opportunity to say that I despise the Temple and its services, and teach My disciples so to do, take the money, and pay for thee and for Me.'

Once again we find this coin, the tetradrachm, stater, or shekel, used in the Gospels. The money received for the betrayal of our Blessed Lord was thirty pieces of silver (*τριάκοντα ἀργύρια*) (Matt. xxvi. 15, xxvii. 3, 5, 6, 9). Here are simply used the Greek words for silver or money (thirty of silver). The Old Testament gives the explanation, and this explanation was first suggested by Mr. Poole. In Exod. xxi. 32 the price of blood for one who was killed by misadventure was fixed at thirty shekels of silver.

St. Matthew's Gospel refers the prophecy as to the betrayal of our Lord to the prophet Jeremiah. This is an error probably on the part of an early transcriber, as de Saulcy pointed out that the Syriac version of the Gospel gives only the words, 'the prophet,' and gives no name. The actual passage to which reference is made is in Zech. xi. 12, 13, and there reference is clearly made to the shekels in

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use at that time. In the time of our Lord there were no shekels current (save perhaps a few of the old ones), although money was reckoned in shekels, very much as in the present day reckonings are made in guineas, although no coin of the value of a guinea is in use. The tetradrachm or stater was, as has been already said, nearly equivalent in value to the shekel, and it was almost certainly this coin that was intended in the passages Matt. xxvi. 15, and xxvii. 3, 5, 6, 9, in which the betrayal is named.

Before leaving the series of Greek coins named in the New Testament, there is one more to which attention must be given.

The smallest coin current in Athens was the *lepton*, the seventh part of the *chalcus* (χαλκός). The name of this Greek coin is twice used in the New Testament, both passages describing the gift of the widow into the chest at the Temple, and translated 'two mites,' Λεπτὰ δύο ὅ ἐστι κοδράντης. It is, however, perfectly certain that the actual coins cast into the chest were not Greek *lepta*, inasmuch as the people were not permitted to bring any but Jewish coins into the Temple precincts. The coins of their conquerors were not permitted, and hence the need of the 'tables of the money-changers' (see p. 75). The coins struck by the Maccabæan ruler Alexander Jannæus (B.C. 105–78), who was known on his coins as Jonathan only, were very popular with the Jews for Temple gifts, inasmuch as they were so thoroughly Jewish in their

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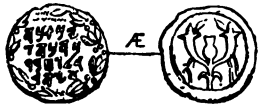
inscriptions and devices. The smallest copper coin of this prince is probably the one to which allusion is made by the Synoptists, Mark xii. 42, Luke xii. 6, and xxi. 2.

The coin is here represented.



COIN OF ALEXANDER JANNÆUS.

Obv.— יונתנה
כהנהג
דלחבר
היהד

Jonathan Hakkohen Haggadol Vecheber Hajehudim = Jonathan the High Priest and the Confederation (or Senate) of the Jews, within a wreath of olive.

Rev.—Two cornucopiæ and a poppy head.

The Gospels of Ulphilas, the Gothic Bishop of 311, in rendering the passage Mark xii. 42, give the value of the Anglo-Saxon styca and penny.

ƀpezen ɣtıcaɣ, ƀ ıɣ, ƥeoɳðunʒ penninʒeɣ.

It should be borne in mind, in considering this gift of the widow, that it was a voluntary offering, and not a tribute, so far at least as any offering to God can be voluntary. It may perhaps be taken as a type of the offertory of the Church, the contributions of

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the faithful, the giving to God of His own, laid on His altar, a holy oblation acceptable to the Lord.

Leaving Greek currency, it is well to consider the Roman money named in the New Testament; and attention is at once claimed by the words which are in the Authorized Version very much mistranslated as *farthing*.

In Matt. x. 29 there is the word *assarion*, translated *farthing*, Οὐχὶ δύο στρουθία ἀσσαρίου πωλεῖται; 'Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?'

In Luke xii. 6 is the same word in the Authorized Version. The Vulgate gives it more accurately as '*nonne quinque passeres veneunt dipondio?*' 'Are not five sparrows sold for a dipondius (two farthings)?' as the word here used is the name of the coin equivalent to two assaria—that is, a *dipondius*.

In Matt. v. 26 and Mark xii. 42 'the uttermost farthing,' and 'two mites, which make one farthing,' a third word is used, κοδράντης, again translated 'farthing.' Here, therefore, are no less than three coins, the as or assarion, the dipondius or two-as piece, and the quadrans or fourth of an as, all translated with much confusion by one English word, farthing.

The as or assarion was the original Roman coin. It was at one time the unit in Roman numeration both of weight and currency, and very early ones bearing the devices

Obv.—The head of Janus Bifrons,

Rev.—The prow of a ship and the figure 1,

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are known weighing nearly a pound each, and struck in bronze.

In process of time the as was reduced in size from its unwieldy original character, until after many reductions, both in size and value, it became a coin of about the size of an English halfpenny. The Greeks adopted the name of the coin, and used it upon their autonomous coins, calling them ἀσσαρίων. Whether, therefore, the coin to which allusion is made in Matt. x. 29 was the Greek inscribed coin of Antioch in Syria, or the Roman inscribed coin bearing the mystic letters S. C. (Senatus consulto), it is not possible with an absolute certainty to tell. Illustrations of each are given. The first, the Roman coin, is one of Augustus,

COIN OF AUGUSTUS.[1]

bearing the emperor's name and titles, and the second the Greek inscribed one of Gadara in Decapolis.

This latter coin is one of peculiar interest, inasmuch as Gadara (ΓΑΔΑΡΑ) was named in Holy Scripture, Mark v. 1. Issued by a pagan population, it bears the head of Nero ΝΕΡΩΝ Cæsar (ΚΑΙ)ΣΑΡ on the obverse, and the goddess Astarte on the reverse,

[1] This block has been drawn a little too large.

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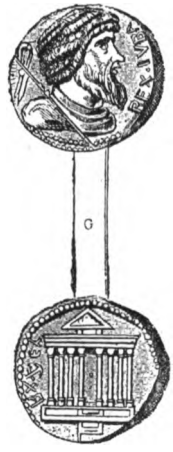
holding a garland and cornucopia, and the date letters.

COIN OF GADARA.

The second word translated 'farthing' is in Luke xii. 6, ἀσσαρίων δύο, and here it is quite clear a single coin, value two assaria, is intended by the expression. The Greek assaria were so issued, but although the value of the piece may have been 1, 2, or 3 assaria, and was so designated upon its face, yet in many cases the size of the coin altered not, and the coin of the largest value was the same size as the coin of the smallest. An illustration is given of an African coin, issued about the time of Julius Cæsar, in order to show the size of the dipondius.



COIN OF JUBA KING OF NUMIDIA.

In the third passage there is a distinctively Roman coin mentioned by its Greek name. The passages are in Matt. v. 26 and Mark xii. 42, and the word used is κοδράντης, the Latin quadrans, the fourth part of a Roman as.

Cicero writes that in his time this was the smallest Roman coin (Plutarch in Cic. xxix. 26).

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This coin weighed about 33 grains, and may be roughly estimated as having a value of about three-quarters of a farthing, while the assarion weighed about 140 grains, and would have a value of about three-quarters of a penny, and the dipondius was worth two assaria. This quadrans was the smallest-sized Roman bronze coin, and much smaller than an English farthing.

The Roman penny or denarius is repeatedly named in Holy Scripture.

a. The parable of the unforgiving servant, 'an hundred pence,' Matt. xviii. 28.

b. The labourers in the vineyard, 'a penny a day,' Matt. xx. 2, 9, 10, 13.

c. The tribute money, 'a penny,' Matt. xxii. 19; Mark xii. 15; Luke xx. 24.

d. The feeding of the five thousand, 'two hundred pennyworth of bread,' Mark vi. 37; John vi. 7.

e. The value of the box of ointment, 'three hundred pence,' Mark xiv. 5; John xii. 5.

f. The parable to Simon, 'five hundred pence,' 'fifty pence,' Luke vii. 41.

g. The Good Samaritan's gift, 'two pence,' Luke x. 35.

h. The price of wheat and barley at the opening of the seal in heaven, 'a penny,' Rev. vi. 6.

There is no doubt whatever as to the coin that is here named. In every case it is the Roman denarius, and it would have been far better had the translators

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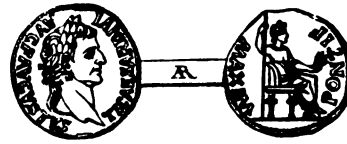
used this word denarius rather than the misleading one of penny, as the coin named was in every case of silver, and not of copper. One of these denarii is here depicted.



DENARIUS OR PENNY.

The denarius was the legal and obligatory tribute money that the Jews were compelled to pay to their conquerors the Romans, and was typical of their subjugation and conquest. Tiberius was the emperor reigning in Rome at the time that the words of our Divine Lord were spoken as to the tribute money (see above *c*), and it is very probable that the coin that was presented to the Great Teacher was a coin of the reigning emperor.

The illustration may then depict the coin that was brought to our Lord by the Pharisees, and illustrate the denarius named in each of the other passages. The inscription reads as follows:—

Obv.—TI[berius] CÆSAR DIVI AUG[usti] F[ilius] AUGUSTUS;

that is to say, Tiberius Cæsar Augustus, son of the god Augustus.

Rev.—PONTIF[ex] MAXIM[us]=Pontifex Maximus, Chief Priest.

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The missing letters of the abbreviated words are supplied in brackets.

The wonderfully searching reply of the Great Teacher to the question that was put to Him is at once apparent. If they, the Jews, had by circulating and using Roman money bearing upon it the head and name of Cæsar acknowledged the rule of the Imperial Cæsar, they had themselves practically answered their own ensnaring question. This coin may be taken as roughly equivalent in value to about eightpence halfpenny of English money. It was the pay of a Roman soldier per day, and was considered very liberal recompense, if not extravagant pay, in the time of our Lord, for an agricultural labourer per day: see Matt. xx. 2, 9, 10, 13 (above *b*), and Tobit v. 14 for a similar passage. It was the usual and chief money of account in use at the time, and larger amounts were rendered in multiples of denarii (see above *d*, *e*, *f*). Its weight was about sixty grains. The reference in the Apocalypse is to famine prices of food, the excessive taxation, to which Gibbon alludes at length as one of the causes of the fall of Rome, having since the time of Caracalla produced great scarcity, and but a chænix, or about a quart of wheat, could be obtained for a denarius.

There is another mention of this coin in the New Testament that would not be at first noticed. It is in the Acts of the Apostles (xix. 19), and the word used is ἀργύρια 'silvers,' translated pieces of silver.

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There is but little doubt, however, that denarii are here intended, and the phrase would be more correctly translated using the name of that coin. It is quite possible that the ten lost pieces of silver drachms or drams (δραχμὰς δέκα), Luke xv. 8, 9, to which allusion has already been made, may have been denarii, because, as I have pointed out, the value at that time of the denarius and dram was equivalent.

The references to the coin cannot fail to bring to mind many important thoughts.

The penitential love of Mary Magdalene (see passages *e* and *f*), the word of wondrous truth that briefly inculcates our duty to God and the State (see passages *c*), the generous gift of the Good Samaritan (see passage *g*), the lavish payment made by the Divine Creator to the workers in His vineyard, infinitely exceeding their merit or right (see passages *b*), the blessings of temporal and sustaining food in hunger, and of spiritual refreshment in His Holy Church (see passages *d*), and the gift of His pardoning mercy to us unfaithful and unprofitable servants (see passage *a*). Many of the New Testament coins, as has been wisely said, connect our thoughts with distinct teaching in the sayings and life of our Blessed Saviour. The shekel calls to mind the price paid in the Temple for His betrayal. The didrachma, His earnest endeavour to reclaim the lost child from sin, under the emblem of the lost coin. The lepton, His words as to

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worshipping God with our substance, and the duty of charity. The stater, the double lesson of willing service to God, His house, and His Church, and the warning against the covetousness that would for gain of silver sacrifice the Lord of Glory; and the denarius, the conscientious submission to the sovereign power, not less as an act of brotherly love than as distinctively a part of Christianity.

It may be remarked by the way that the title of Saviour or Redeemer was not one of itself unknown to the Greeks, although the idea of Divine self-sacrifice was not in the least anticipated by them in their mythology.

The following coin, bearing the head of Apollo, describes him as Saviour, and reads— ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ ΣΩΤΗΡ.

COIN REPRESENTING APOLLO WITH THE TITLE OF SAVIOUR.

When the New Testament speaks of money in a general sense, it does not always use the same word. In the following passages the word used is *ἀργύριον* (silver).

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Matt. xxv. 18–27—The parable of the talents, the word talent being only used as signifying a certain *weight* of silver.

Matt. xxviii. 12–15—Money given to the soldiers by the elders to prevent the story of the Resurrection being spread abroad.

Mark xiv. 11; Luke xxii. 5—Money promised to Judas by the priests.

Matt. x. 9; Luke ix. 3—Money not to be carried by the apostles when on their journey.

Luke xix. 15–23—Parable of the ten pieces of money (silver).

Acts vii. 16—The mention by St. Stephen in his address of the purchase by Abraham of the cave of Machpelah.

Acts viii. 20—St. Peter's words to Simon Magus.

In Matt. xxvi. 9, the phrase is 'this ointment might have sold for *much*,' and money is understood; the parallel passages showing that denarii were intended.

In two passages in St. Mark the word used is χαλκόν, copper money.

Mark vi. 8—The prohibition to the apostles to carry money.

Mark xii. 41—The gifts to the Treasury.

This word also occurs in Matt. x. 9, in conjunction with the words 'gold and silver.'

In the former set of passages reference is clearly made to silver money—that is to say, to drachms, staters, denarii, or the old shekels of Ezra, if any

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remained; in the latter passages the Herodian copper coinage, or the small and unimportant copper money of Greek or Roman issue. The lessons impressed by the latter passages may well derive an added value by the unimportant character and trivial worth of the money to which the evangelist alludes.

In the Acts of the Apostles, the word translated 'money' in iv. 37, where it was laid by Barnabas at the feet of the apostles, should be more strictly rendered *price, value, full value,* the amount actually obtained, the word used being χρῆμα (*pretium*). This word is used also in its significance of the price or value of a man, the price that will obtain favour, in the passage where Felix hoped to have received a bribe as to the freedom of St. Paul—that is to say, to receive his price, Acts xxiv. 26.

The word ἀργύριον is also to be found in four other passages, and in all these reference is made to silver money, and the word is rightly translated 'silver.' The passages are :—

Acts iii. 6—'Silver and gold have I none.'

Acts xx. 33—'I have coveted no man's silver.'

Jas. v. 3—'Your gold and silver is cankered.'

1 Pet. i. 18—'Corruptible things, as silver and gold.'

Allusion has already been briefly made to a further reference to money—the interesting passages as to the 'tables of the money-changers.' Mr. Madden was

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one of the earliest to point out the striking divergence between the three words used in the New Testament, all of which the Authorized Version translates in a similar way.

In Matt. xxv. 27 is used the word τραπεζίτες (*trapezites*, exchangers), and this word is also used by St. Luke in xix. 23, where 'paying into the bank' is the translation. Here is seen a word that refers to private bankers or money exchangers, and is simply derived from the table, τράπεζα, at which the bankers sat, in the same manner as we derive our words bank, banker, &c. from the bench of the Italian money-changer (e.g. *banca rotta* 'broken bench' in Italian, because the money-changer's bench was broken on his failure, hence 'bankrupt').

The original word τράπεζα (*trapeza*) occurs in Matt. xxi. 12, Mark xi. 15, and John ii. 15, where reference is made to the money-changers in the Temple; but in these passages it simply means the tables at which the men sat, and is translated correctly 'tables.'

The official money-changers, to which reference must next be made, had their tables, as did the private exchangers; but it is important to notice that Matt. xxv. 27 and Luke xix. 23 refer to the private traders, whereas these next passages refer to men of a different standing.

The recognized officials who changed foreign, i.e. pagan, money into Jewish money, which alone could be used in the Temple, are called by the evangelists

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St. Matthew and St. Mark κολλυβιστῶν (*kollibiston*). This word is derived from κόλλυβος (*collybus*), and the collybus was in all probability a tiny silver coin, the very smallest piece of silver money in use, but not otherwise alluded to in the New Testament. St. John in ii. 14 and 15 uses another word, κερματιστάς, and for money the similar word τὸ κέρμα. This word κερματιστάς is derived from κείρω, 'to cut off or cut up small,' the noun being cut-up pieces, i.e. small pieces of money. This was the official and technical term for those who certainly had an official status, as κολλυβιστής was a more ordinary term; but as St. John clearly alludes to a different occasion from that named by the evangelists St. Matthew and St. Mark, he may be perhaps alluding to a public State banker at the Temple, and who more than the others would have conceived it his right to trade within the holy precincts.

The necessary changing of the foreign money and money of their conquerors into local Jewish money had degenerated into a vicious and usurious habit, and was carried on at last actually inside the Temple. It received the strongest condemnation from our Blessed Lord, and by Him the bankers, private, public or official, were driven from His Father's house.

As three words are in the foregoing passages used in speaking of the money-changers, so three separate words are used in the New Testament in speaking of the treasury or treasure.

1. The first γαζοφυλάκιον (*gazophylacium*), from γάζα

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'a treasure' and φυλάσσω 'to keep,' is used in the references to the gift of the widow's mite into the treasury when our Lord was sitting near by (Mark xii. 41–43; Luke xxi. 1; John viii. 20). The noun γάζα appears in Acts viii. 27, in speaking of the treasure of Candace.

The similar word in Hebrew appears often in the Old Testament for treasures, as for example in Ezra v. 17, vi. 1, vii. 20; Esther iii. 9, iv. 7; Ezek. xxvii. 24, A.V. 'chests'; 1 Chron. xxviii. 11. It is strictly a Persian, and not a Hebrew word, pronounced in Persian *ganza*, and by the Hebrew, therefore, *genez* (Esther) גְּנַז or *g'naz* (Ezra) גְּנָז. The word occurs also in Nehemiah, and often in the Apocryphal books of Maccabees.

2. In Matt. xxvii. 6, speaking of the money returned by Judas, the priests said, 'It is not lawful to put them into the treasury,' and here the word used is κορβανᾶν, which again appears in Mark vii. 11, 'It is Corban,' κορβᾶν.

The allusion here is, not to the general treasury for the Temple service, or for wood, offerings, or incense, but to gifts specially dedicated to God by promise, vow, or solemn offering—what would be better understood by us as an oblation or a gift offered at the altar.

3. The third word is θησαυρός (*thesaurus*), that which is laid up, saved, treasured, preserved, from θέσις εἰς ἄυριον, 'laying up for the morrow,' and is used as to

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valuables and treasures of personal, and not dedicated property (Matt. ii. 11; vi. 19, 20; xii. 35; xiii. 44, 52; xix. 21; Mark x. 21; Luke vi. 45; xii. 33; xviii. 22; 2 Cor. iv. 7; Col. ii. 3; Heb. xi. 26).

To conclude on New Testament money, the references to gold must be given.

Our Lord forbade His disciples to carry gold (Matt. x. 9), and St. Peter stated that he possessed none (Acts iii. 6). St. Paul assured the disciples that he coveted no man's gold (Acts xx. 33); and there are two references to gold in the Epistles (Jas. v. 3 and 1 Pet. i. 18).

The references are all to gold money generically, and not to a coin. The Roman *aurei* were probably well known to the Jews at the time. The talent, it must be remembered, was never a coin, but a weight or sum of money; see Matt. xviii. 23–35; xxv. 14–30; Luke xix. 13–24.

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CHAPTER VI

COINS ILLUSTRATIVE OF BIBLE STORY

THE revolts of the Jews against the Roman power, which took place first in A.D. 66, do not concern the purpose of this book, as it is not written to describe all the coins issued by the Jews as a nation.

COINS OF ELEAZAR THE PRIEST.

The first revolt was led by Eleazar, son of Ananias the high priest, before whom St. Paul was brought, and of whom he said, 'God shall smite thee, thou whited wall,' Acts xxiii. 3. The silver and copper coins of Eleazar are here depicted. These inscriptions

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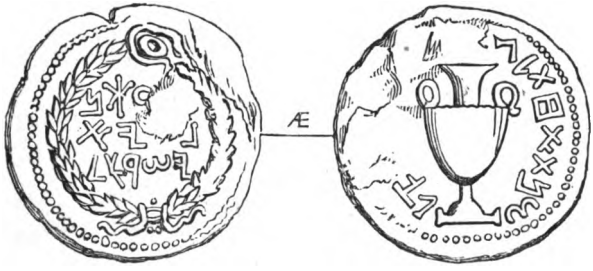
are in Hebrew, and refer to the first, second or third year of the Redemption or Deliverance of Israel.

The coins struck by the Sanhedrim bear a representation of the Temple, around which the affection of the Jews still lived, and to save which they rallied their forces. The Sanhedrim coins are shown below,

COIN OF THE FIRST YEAR OF THE REVOLT.



COIN OF SIMON OF THE FIRST YEAR OF THE REVOLT.

with Hebrew inscriptions recording the deliverance of Zion, and with the representation of one of the Temple vessels of gold or silver.

Other coins issued in this revolt are shown below, merely as illustrative of the period, and for the sake of the characteristic Jewish emblems of a vine leaf,

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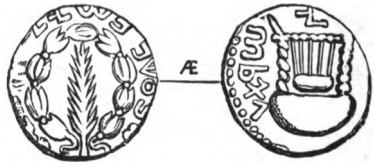
a lyre, a palm-tree, and Temple vases and vessels that appear upon them.

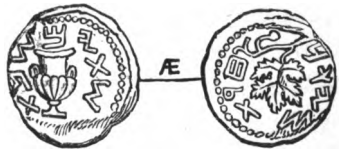
COINS OF SIMON NASI.

COIN OF SIMON OF THE FIRST YEAR OF THE REVOLT.

COIN OF SIMON OF THE FIRST YEAR OF THE REVOLT.



COIN OF SIMON OF THE FIRST YEAR OF THE REVOLT (YEAR 67–68).



COIN OF SIMON OF THE SECOND YEAR OF THE REVOLT (YEAR 67–68).

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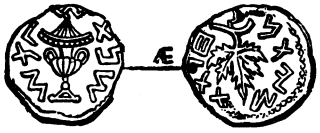

COIN OF SIMON OF THE THIRD YEAR OF THE REVOLT (YEAR 68–69).

In A.D. 70 Titus besieged Jerusalem, and after most heroic defence the city fell, the famine having subdued the dauntless energy of its inhabitants. The Temple was destroyed, and the sufferings depicted by Josephus were of the most terrible character.

Bearing in mind the occasion upon which our Divine Lord wept over the ultimate fate of the Holy City, in view of His great prophecy, that 'there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down,' it may be of interest if specimens are given of the Roman coins struck and issued to commemorate the fall of Jerusalem and the capture of the city by Vespasian and Titus.

The illustrations are of the obverses only of three coins of Vespasian, and depict the captive Jew and Jewess seated in different attitudes of despair.

In one the Roman emperor or a soldier is standing on guard by a captive Jew, and in another the Jew has his hands bound behind his back. In two examples the palm-tree is shown, and in the third a trophy of arms. What a wealth of meaning there is in the terse, distinct, defiant inscription, *Judæa Capta*, Captured Judæa! The words of the prophet Isaiah (iii. 26),

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'she being desolate shall sit upon the ground,' are strikingly illustrated by the devices on these coins.

OBVERSES OF THREE COINS OF VESPASIAN.

A further revolt of the Jews during the time of Hadrian need not be mentioned, save for one circum-

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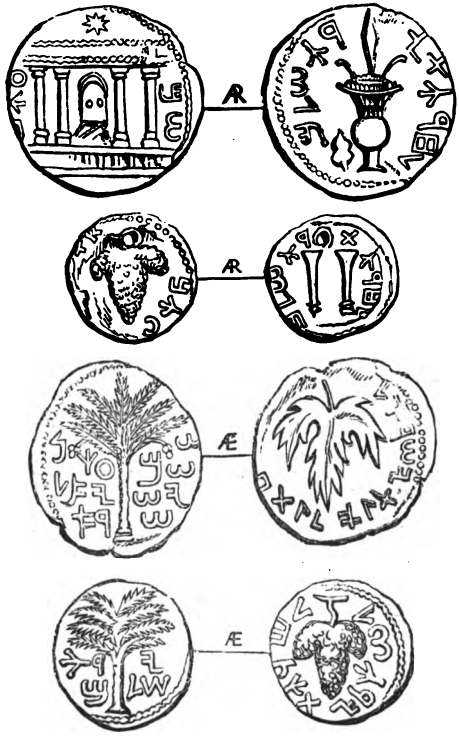
stance. The leader, Simon Bar Cochab, in A. D. 132 announced himself as the Messiah, calling himself the son of a star (Bar Cochab), and quoting as his



COINS OF THE SECOND REVOLT.

warrant the words in Num. xxiv. 17, 'The Star out of Jacob.' His coins bear Jewish emblems, the palm-tree, lyre, vine-leaf, wheat, grapes, and the Temple, and noticeably the star above the Temple; and some

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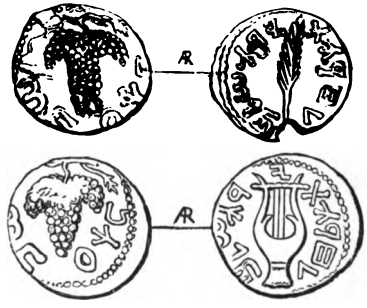
are depicted here, which possess a certain interest. The trumpets used in the Temple service appear, it will be noticed, on one coin.



COINS OF THE SECOND REVOLT.

To complete the desolation of the city after this revolt had been subdued, Hadrian built a new city on the ruins of Jerusalem, calling it Ælia Capitolina, erecting a temple in it to Jupiter, forming the district into a Roman colony, and so crushing completely the ideas and affections of the Jews, and setting their dearest traditions and their faith at defiance.

The copper coin of Hadrian here shown com-

COPPER COIN OF HADRIAN.

memorates this outrageous action, and the founding of the colony of Ælia Capitolina.

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There are certain passages in the Bible which receive remarkable confirmation from coins. It is a well-known fact that in many instances historical facts have their chief illustration in coins, and in a few cases coins are almost the only remaining pictorial representation of what is known to have existed.

The historical accuracy of the Bible, and its unfailing truth, derive considerable support from the coins that remain in existence; and it will be well to briefly point out a few noteworthy instances in which

PHRYGIAN COIN.

coins illustrate and ratify statements in Holy Writ. A very curious and rare Phrygian coin, struck at Apamea (called also Cibotos, an ark) in Phrygia, in the reign of Septimus Severus (A.D. 193–211), bears an illustration of the ark.

The reverse shows a vessel floating on the water, and containing two persons, two others (or the same two at another period) standing on dry ground. On

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the ark is the word ΝΩΕ (Noah), and above it are the dove with an olive branch and the raven. The raven, it will be seen, is resting on the ark, as it did not return into the ark, but going to and fro doubtless rested on the ark. The tradition preserved in the Sibylline books was to the effect that it was near to Apamea that the ark rested.

Ἔστι δέ τι Φρυχίης ἐπὶ ἠπείροιο μελαίνης
Ἠλίβατον ταννμῆκες ὄρος Ἀραρὰτ δὲ καλεῖται·
Ἔνθα φλέβες μεγάλου ποταμοῦ Μαρσύαο πεφύκαν
Τοῦ δὲ κιβωτὸς ἔμεινεν ἐν ὑψηέντι καρήνῳ
Ληξάντων ὑδάτων;

which may be translated—

'There is on the mainland of Black Phrygia a steep and far-stretching mountain which is called Ararat. Here arise the springs of the great river Marsyas. Upon its lofty top the ark rested as the waters receded.'

TYRIAN COINS.

The great god Baal, of frequent mention in the Old Testament, is portrayed upon the coins of the

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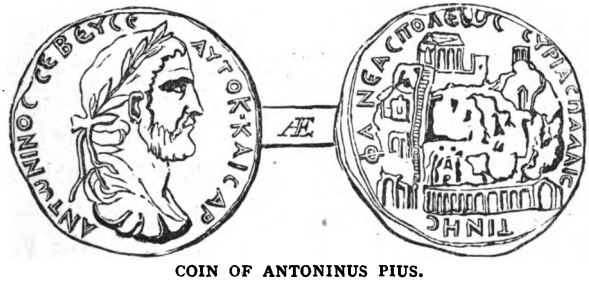
Tyrian isle Cosyra, and the goddess Ashtaroth on a coin of Phœnicia.

In this cut, which is enlarged from the coin, she is

PHŒNICIAN COIN (ENLARGED).

depicted as erect, holding a staff or sceptre on one coin, and in her state car with canopy in the other.

A coin of Antoninus Pius (A.D. 138) gives a representation of the temple of Mount Gerizim in Samaria, mentioned in St. John iv. 20.



COIN OF ANTONINUS PIUS.

The inscriptions may be translated:—

The Emperor Cæsar Augustus Antoninus Pius.

Money of Flavia Neapolis of Palestine in Syria.

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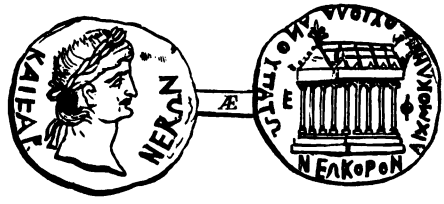
To illustrate the events described in the 19th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles two coins may be taken. On the first may be read NERΩN KAICAP, Nero Cæsar, and on the reverse (Money) of the Ephesians, NEΩKOPOI, wardens or keepers of the Temple.

This latter word is translated in verse 35 as 'worshippers.' It is the title given to the Ephesians, first by themselves and afterwards by others, and on which they prided themselves as being keepers,



EPHESIAN COIN.

wardens, and guardians of that world-renowned Temple. The word strictly means temple-sweeper, but was considered a title of high honour. The coin above was issued by Æchmocles Aviola the Proconsul, who exercised authority in A.D. 54–67, during the very time at which St. Paul was at Ephesus. He is called on the coin *ἀνθύπατος*, which is the very word used in verse 38, and translated 'deputies.' The letters EΦ (Eph) stand for Ephesus. The other illustration, which, like the first, depicts the Temple of Ephesus, is not a coin, but probably one of the silver

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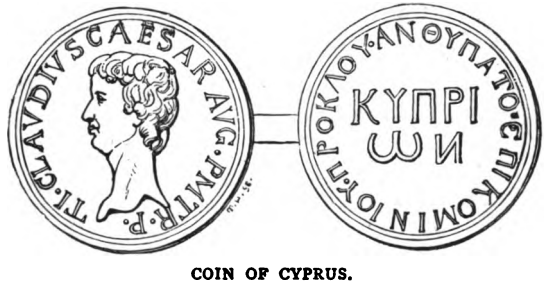
charms or mementos that were made by Demetrius and others of his craft in large numbers, for visitors to the temple to purchase (Acts xix. 24, 25). It bears

EPHESIAN CHARM.

the name of the city ΕΦΕSIΩΝ, and in the representation of the temple is the figure of Diana.

Both cuts are therefore unconscious illustrations in



COIN OF CYPRUS.

their very words and their devices of the genuine character of the Bible narrative.

Another interesting corroboration of the verbal

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accuracy of the New Testament can be given from a coin of Cyprus. In Acts xiii. 7, Sergius Paulus is called proconsul or deputy of Cyprus, the word used being again ἀνθύπατος. At that particular moment he was so called; but a few years earlier deputies of Cyprus had been called proprætors, and not proconsuls.

At the date of the Bible narrative the title proconsul was in force, and a coin of that time struck by Cominus, ΚΟΜΙΝΙΟΣ, acting under Claudius Cæsar as ruler of Cyprus, bears the title ΑΝΘΥΠΑΤΟΣ.

MEDALS USED AT ISTHMIAN GAMES.

St. Paul in his Epistles makes frequent mention of the great Isthmian games; see Heb. xii. 1; Phil. ii. 16, iii. 14, iv. 1; 1 Cor. iv. 9, ix. 24–27; Gal. v. 7;

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1 Tim. iv. 8; 2 Tim. ii. 5; and three representations of medals struck for use at these games may be of interest.

On these medals are shown the wreath of leaves given to the victor, the name of the peninsula at Corinth at which the games took place, and one of the creatures, a crocodile, chained up for use at the animal fights and contests that were so popular a part of the barbarous sport.

A coin of Ptolemy Philadelphus, B.C. 280, in whose time the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek by the Seventy, and the Septuagint (LXX) version so obtained, is illustrated.

COIN OF PTOLEMY PHILADELPHUS.

It shows Ptolemy and Berenice on the obverse, and Ptolemy Philadelphus and Arsinœ, their children, on the reverse; the inscription being ΘΕΩΝ ΑΔΕΛΦΩΝ, 'brother divinities.'

I may fittingly conclude with two Roman medallions bearing upon them the Labarum and the sacred monogram of Christ, the ☧ Chr(ist), first adopted by the Emperor Constantine on his coins and on the Roman standards, as a sign that Christianity had

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overcome even the paganism of the Roman emperor, and had started on the course of continued victory which is only to end in the subjugation of the entire world to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

PRIMITIVE SYMBOLICAL CROSS.

THE LABARUM.

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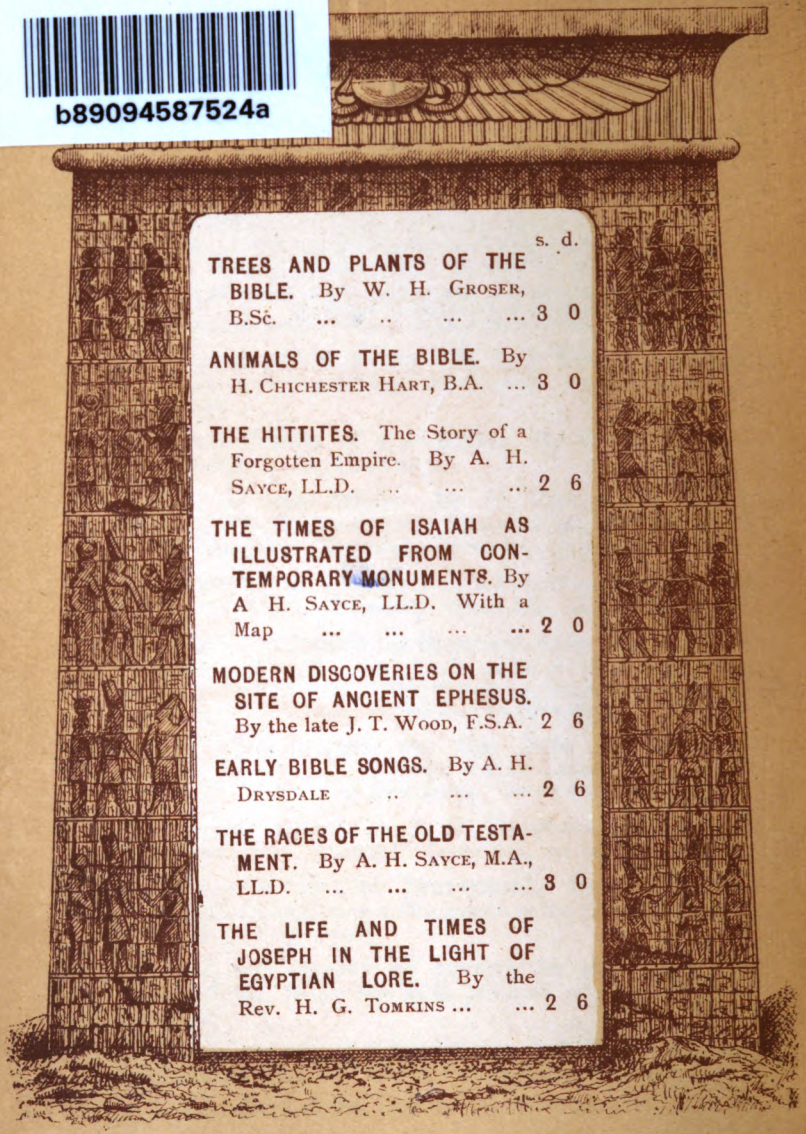

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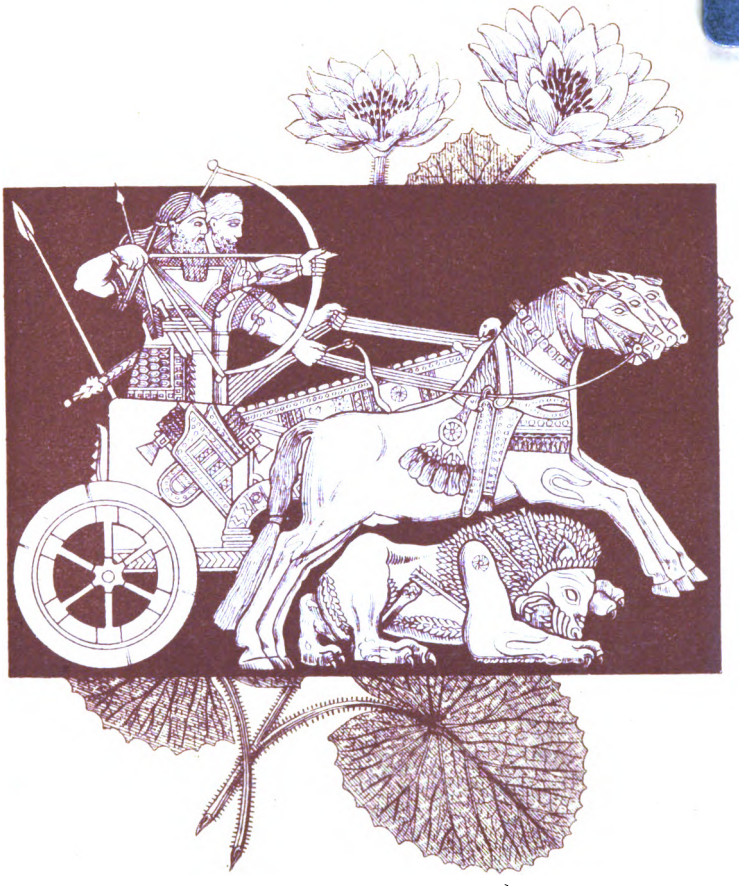

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